GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1839
ANSWERED ON:04.05.2016
Denial of Visa to U.S. Delegation
Venugopal Dr. Ponnusamy

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has not issued visa to a delegation of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom that was planning to travel to India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) has expressed desire to send a delegation to India.

India is a vibrant pluralistic society founded on strong democratic principles. The Indian Constitution guarantees fundamental rights to all its citizens including the right to freedom of religion. Government does not see the locus standi of a foreign entity like USCIRF to pronounce on the state of Indian citizens" constitutionally protected rights.

The Government looks forward to continuing working with the United States Government for sharing of experience and best practice on all issues of mutual interest under the established bilateral mechanisms like the India-United States Global Issues Forum.